



# United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION  
P.O. Box 61470  
Boulder City, NV 89006-1470



IN REPLY REFER TO:

DEC 17 2020

LC-4221  
2.2.4.23

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

Mr. Eric P. Witkoski  
Executive Director  
Colorado River Commission of Nevada  
555 East Washington Avenue, Suite 3100  
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Subject: Approval of Calendar Year (CY) 2021 Colorado River Water Diversion – State of Nevada (State)

Dear Mr. Witkoski:

The Bureau of Reclamation has received the State's CY 2021 Colorado River water diversion estimate. In accordance with Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations Part 417 (Part 417), this letter provides the State with notice of my determination regarding the State's proposed diversion and beneficial use of Colorado River water for CY 2021.

The State has indicated it anticipates consuming its entire basic apportionment of 300,000 acre-feet (AF) during CY 2021 and, based on an estimated return flow credit of 230,000 AF, requests approval to divert up to 530,000 AF.

The State is entitled to divert a quantity of Colorado River water sufficient to satisfy a consumptive use of 300,000 AF per year, plus any surplus water determined to be available by the Secretary of the Interior. The State's diversion right is shared among (1) entitlement holders whose right to divert and consume Colorado River water existed prior to the formation of the Southern Nevada Water Authority (SNWA) in 1991, and (2) SNWA and its member agencies in accordance with the entitlements established in the SNWA contract and its subcontracts with purveyor members.

In accordance with Section III.B.2.a of Exhibit 1<sup>1</sup> to the *Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan Agreement* (LB DCP Agreement), the State is required to make a DCP Contribution in the amount of 8,000 AF in CY 2021, based on the August 2020 24-Month Study projection that Lake Mead's elevation will be 1,085.28 feet on January 1, 2021.<sup>2</sup> As documented in the State's

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<sup>1</sup> *Lower Basin Drought Contingency Operations* (LBOps).

<sup>2</sup> In the event Lake Mead's actual elevation on January 1, 2021 is higher than 1,090 feet, Section III.E.3 of LBOps will apply.

INTERIOR REGION 8 • LOWER COLORADO BASIN

ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA\*, NEVADA\*

\* PARTIAL

diversion estimate, SNWA agreed to make the State's CY 2021 DCP Contribution using one or more of the methods defined in Section II of LBOs. In accordance with Section III.D.1 of LBOs, the Colorado River Commission of Nevada, SNWA, and Reclamation will meet and confer at least quarterly during CY 2021 regarding the status and source of the State's DCP Contribution.

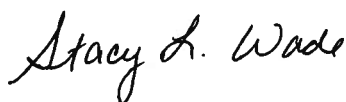
Based upon a review of the CY 2021 diversion estimate provided by the State, the information gathered during Reclamation's Part 417 consultation, and other pertinent information, I approve the diversion of up to 530,000 AF of Colorado River water during CY 2021 for use by the State's Colorado River water entitlement holders. This approval is conditioned on the State's total consumptive use not exceeding 300,000 AF.

Reclamation acknowledges SNWA's plan to create up to 43,000 AF of Tributary Conservation Intentionally Created Surplus (ICS) and up to 100,000 AF of Extraordinary Conservation (EC) ICS during CY 2021, and to store the full amount created, less the one-time system assessment, in Lake Mead. The actual amount of ICS created by SNWA in CY 2021 is subject to verification by Reclamation and the limits set forth in Section IV.B and Section IV.C of LBOs.

Reclamation will monitor and project diversions and consumptive use of Colorado River water during CY 2021 in an effort to assist each entitlement holder in ensuring its annual approval amount is not exceeded. Beginning in January 2021, these projections will be available to water users each day on Reclamation's website: [www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/hourly/forecast.pdf](http://www.usbr.gov/lc/region/g4000/hourly/forecast.pdf). It is expected that the State's entitlement holders will use this information to adjust diversions to remain within approved annual quantities or, as appropriate, seek modification of the approval.

Thank you for submitting the State's diversion estimate for CY 2021. If you have questions, please contact Mr. Jeremy Dodds, Water Accounting and Verification Group Manager, at (702) 293-8164 or [jdodds@usbr.gov](mailto:jdodds@usbr.gov).

Sincerely,



Stacy L. Wade  
Acting Regional Director  
Interior Region 8: Lower Colorado Basin  
Bureau of Reclamation

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